

I. Using Advisory Committees

Advisory committees at the state and local level should help educators determine the nature, content and activities of each course. In addition, they can provide valuable input regarding the facilities required to implement the program. Local committees are helpful in determining community needs and in identifying the human and material resources available from within the community and local industry.¹

Although it is important to note that such committees are not policy or decision making groups, their services are valuable and should be given every consideration.... But finally, it is the responsibility of the ITE/TE instructor and the school's administration to decide whether (and how) the recommendations are to be implemented.

Local advisory committees may be the single most important source of information and assistance available to the ITE/TE teacher. Considerable assistance can be obtained from these committees. However, in interaction with state and national advisory committees an even broader perspective on programing, industrial needs and available resources is available.

One overall advisory committee should be established for the ITE/TE program. If the school has a vocational or community advisory committee/group/ organization, then it is important that a representative from the ITE/TE advisory committee serve on the other advisory group for liaison and coordination purposes. Similarly one ITE/TE advisory council member should be designated to establish a correspondence link with the national Technology Education Advisory Council. Such correspondence should be directed through the ITEA national office. Another member should keep in touch with Missouri's Council on Vocational Education.

ITE/TE advisory committees are helpful in determining community needs and in identifying the human and material resources available from within the community and local industry.

National Technology Education Advisory Council

At the National Level, the Technology Education Advisory Council (TEAC) was established to provide information to the technology education profession about current developments and possible trends in technology and industry and about the implications of those trends for technology education. As such the TEAC services to:

- Recommend ways of resolving discrepancies between the programs and philosophies of technology education and current industrial/technological practices.
- Recommend content directions to improve the relevance of technology education.
- Suggest methods of improving the public's perception and understanding of technology education.
- Facilitate the cooperation between industry and education to improve the education of youth.

¹ *Guidelines for Industrial Arts in Career Education*, n.d.

The TEAC's recommendations are advisory since the council has no official policy-making authority. The council's topics of discussion vary as the association's membership suggests or as requested by the ITEA's Board of Directors—the TEAC's sponsoring group.

Local ITE/TE Advisory Committees¹

The duty of local industrial technology/technology education advisory committees is to counsel and advise ITE/TE instructors, supervisors, school administrators and the school board concerning the directions, management and supervision of the ITE/TE program. Generally these committees also assist in the development and maintenance of the ITE/TE curriculum and facility. An excellent guide (Behymer) to the use of advisory committees is available from UMC's Instructional Materials Laboratory.

Local advisory committees provide community and industrial input to teachers and counselors. They are not policy- or decision-making groups, rather they advise by reviewing policies and programs, by expressing opinions on programs, services, facilities and learning activities and by identifying trends, priorities and resources. It is recommended that such committees be asked to submit an annual report as well as such special reports as appropriate. It is also important that the advisory committee addresses the ITE/TE program's relationship to the overall school curriculum. Other recommended advisory committee activities include:

- Making recommendations regarding program content and needed curriculum, equipment and facility changes.
- Providing information and technical assistance necessary to update the program.
- Assisting in developing performance objectives
- Assisting in developing and conducting community surveys.
- Providing with information regarding new career opportunities.
- Assisting in obtaining community resources.
- Assisting in the development and promotion of good public relations.
- Assisting in the evaluation and review of the program (Towler, p. 75).

Local ITE/TE Advisory Committee Membership

There is no one answer to the optimum size of an advisory committee. Each committee should be comprised of members representative of the community it serves. Normally however, about seven members (less in small communities) will provide adequate coverage of geography, minorities and industries within a given community. The following should provide helpful guidelines for selecting committee members.

- Industry representatives, e.g.:
 - One individual from the communications industry.
 - One from energy/power.
 - One from materials processing industry

¹Adapted from Towler, pp. 75-76.

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- One ITE/TE educator
 - One or more parents (can be identified by the local PTA)
 - One or two students (at least one should be female)
 - One representative from the school or system's administration
 - One individual representing vocational education
 - One specialist in the area of special needs populations

Some method of membership rotation should be devised prior to the actual formation of a committee. Fresh viewpoints and ideas are essential to properly address our rapidly changing technological world. For this reason, only under exceptional circumstances should the reappointment of a committee member be considered. One workable way to address the rotation of committee members is to make their initial terms of varying length—typically one, two and three years are used.

Advisory committees could of course use consultants, on a temporary basis, to assist in solving specific problems. Specialists in areas outside of the committee's areas of expertise can serve on a temporary basis until a specific problem or concern is adequately addressed. If this arrangement is used the consultants would not have voting privileges in committee matters. Their services would be on a strictly consulting basis.

Local ITE/TE Advisory Committee Operations

Selection of Officers

Each advisory committee should elect a chair and a secretary. It is recommended that a teacher or administrator not serve as chair, but may serve as secretary.

Officer duties

The chair:

- Shall call and preside at all committee meetings.
- Shall schedule all meetings and make necessary committee assignments.
- Should prepare and agenda for each meeting.

The secretary:

- Will record, maintain and distribute minutes of every meeting to each member of the committee.
- Is responsible for notifying members of the meeting date, time and place.
- Should provide all members with an agenda and issues to come before the committee prior to the meeting, preferably one week in advance.

Meetings

It is recommended that:

- The initial meeting be held within thirty days following appointment of the committee. The superintendent, or a representative, should call this meeting and preside until a chair is selected.
- The committee members be acquainted with the purpose and duties of the committee.

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- Committee meetings be planned for specific purposes. Behymer's guide provides an excellent outline for a program of work.
 - Regular scheduling of meetings be determined by membership, based on existing problems and important matters for consideration.
 - The committee should establish its own governance rules.

The School's Responsibility to Committee Members

Committee members should be informed, by an official letter from the superintendent of schools, that membership is an official act which has state approval. The committee and school administrators should work in harmony to serve a definite purpose. Committee members must be advised that they are resource persons to improve curricula, facilities, teacher preparation, occupational information, community surveys and public relations. (Towler, p. 76)